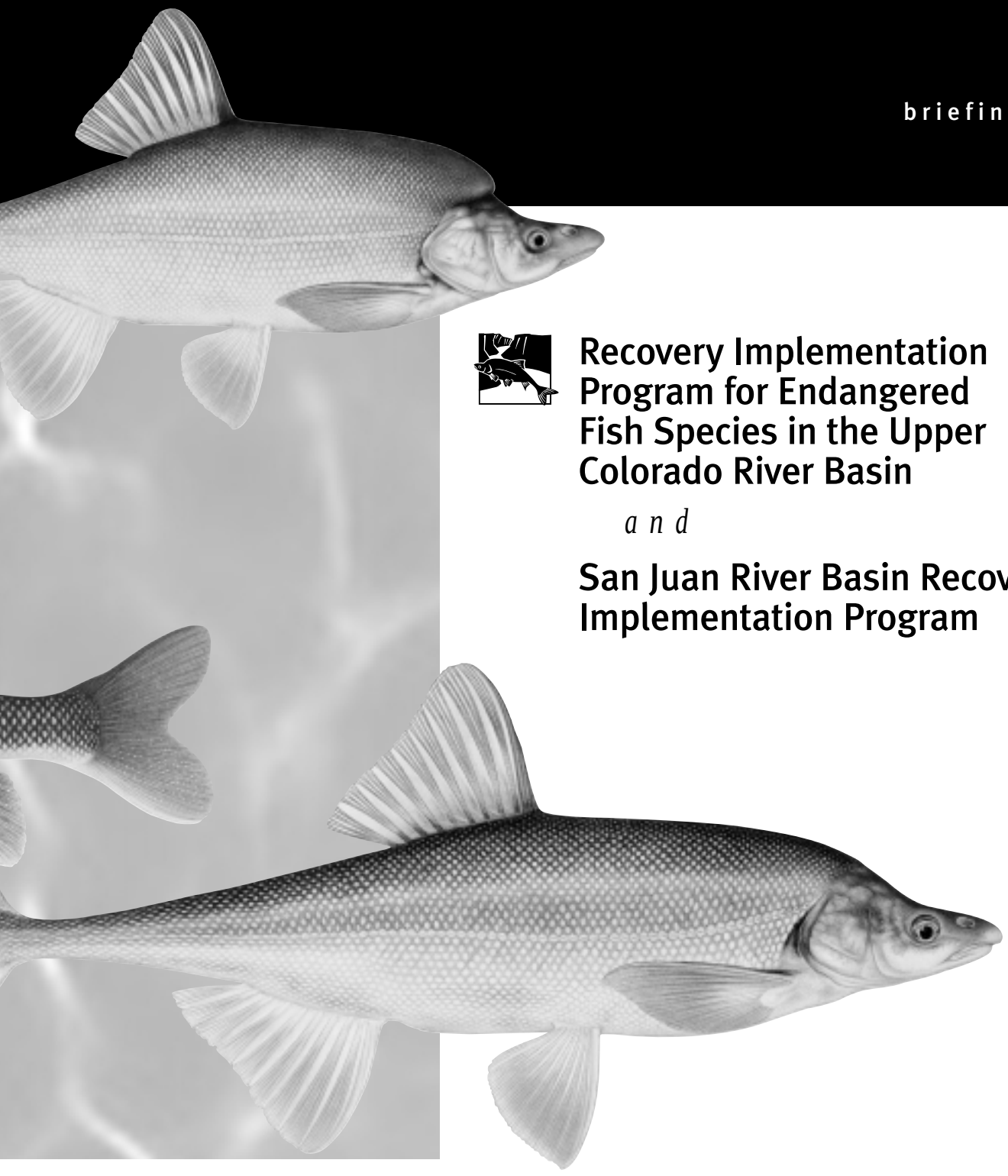
2000 Washington, D.C.

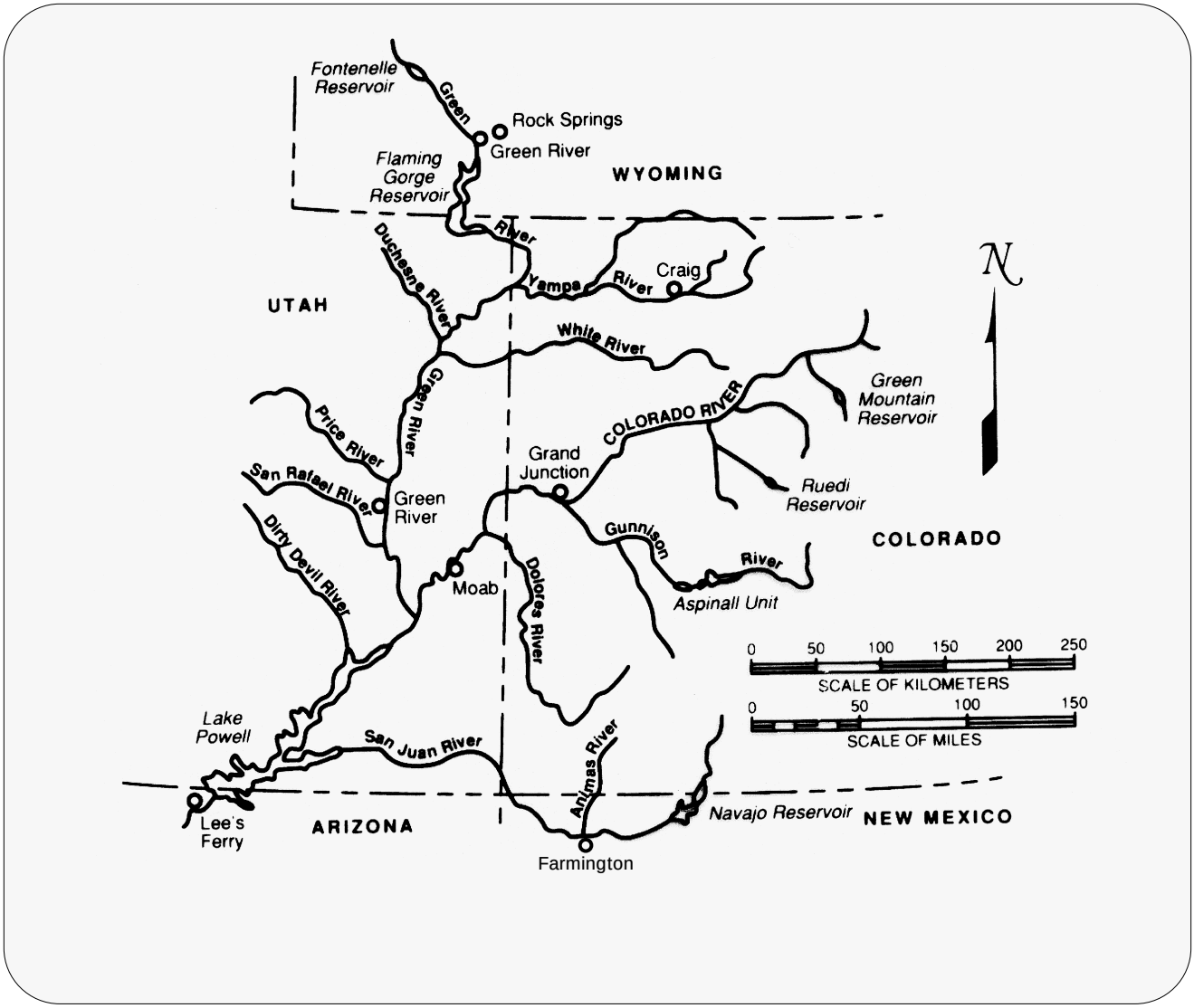
briefing book



Recovery Implementation Program for Endangered Fish Species in the Upper Colorado River Basin

and

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program



Geographic Scope

The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program covers the Colorado River and its tributaries in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming.

The San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program covers the San Juan River and its tributaries in Colorado, Utah, and New Mexico.

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish
Recovery Program and San Juan River Basin Recovery
Implementation Program

2000 Washington, D.C. Briefing Book

Table of Contents

Requested FY 2001
Congressional Action Items

Participants in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program would like to make the following requests of Congress for FY 2001.

Fish and Wildlife Service Funding

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

- $706,000 requested in "recovery" funds
- $327,000 requested for operation and maintenance of Ouray National Fish Hatchery

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program

- $106,000 requested in Region 2's "recovery" funds

Bureau of Reclamation Funding

- $6.861 million in "Endangered Species Recovery Programs and Activities" for the Upper Colorado Region. ($4.887 million for Upper Colorado River; $1.394 million for San Juan River Basin)

Details of these requests follow. All funding recommendations are included in the President's proposed budget for FY 2001.

Fish and Wildlife Service Budget

1. **Support Fish and Wildlife Service funding for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program ($706,000 requested in "recovery" funds)**

   Projects to be funded are:

   - Fish and Wildlife Service program management: Funding covers salaries and expenses of Program Director and staff.
   - Interagency standardized monitoring program: This activity supports Service participation in monitoring fish populations (including stocked fish) and their responses to recovery actions.
   - Data management: The Service maintains all fish data collected in the Recovery Program in computerized form to facilitate analysis. This includes maintaining the overall database, summarizing data, and providing an annual listing of all tagged fish.

2. **Support Fish and Wildlife Service funds for operation of the Ouray National Fish Hatchery (Total: $327,000— $322,000 for fish hatchery operation; $5,000 for annual maintenance)**

   The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program requests Congressional support to operate the Service's National Fish Hatchery in Ouray, Utah. Funding will enable the hatchery to continue to raise and hold endangered fish for stocking, research, and refugia (adult fish for spawning and maintaining gene pool.)

3. **Support Fish and Wildlife Service funding for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program ($106,000 requested in Region 2's "recovery" funds)**

   Projects to be funded are:

   - Fish and Wildlife Service program management: Funding supports partial salary for the coordinator and, funding permitting, dollars for research and monitoring.

Bureau of Reclamation Budget

1. **Support Bureau of Reclamation funds for the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery and San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Programs.**

   Upper Colorado River and San Juan River Basin Recovery Program participants request Congressional support for $6.861 million for FY 2001 in "Endangered Species Recovery Programs and Activities for the Upper Colorado Region." This amount is included in the Administration's proposed FY 2001 budget for Reclamation. It would provide the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program with $4.887 million, the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program with $1.394 million and Activities to Avoid Jeopardy with $535,000. It also includes a request for $45,000 to fund research associated with the habitat needs of the Kanab Amber Snail. The $4.887 million, supported by Upper Basin participants, would be used for water acquisition and capital construction projects including:

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program Activities

- Fish passage: Reclamation funds will be used to construct a fish ladder on the Colorado River at the Grand Valley Project. This activity will benefit razorback suckers and Colorado pikeminnows by giving them access to more of their historic habitat.
- Water acquisition: Reclamation initiatives include:
  - Modification and automation of canals to more efficiently operate irrigation projects near Grand Junction, Colorado, and dedicating the "saved" water to endangered fish.
  - Using water stored in several smaller Reclamation reservoirs to enhance late-summer flows in the Colorado River.
  - Coordinating Federal and private reservoir operations in the Colorado River headwaters to enhance spring peak flows downstream.
- Floodplain restoration: Funding is needed in FY 2001 to continue land acquisition, levee removal, and other floodplain restoration activities at high priority sites. Restoring these floodplains is thought to be especially important for endangered razorback suckers and will benefit a variety of wetland-dependent wildlife.
- Endangered fish growout ponds: Existing hatcheries and native fish production facilities fall short of meeting stocking needs. Funding is needed in FY 2001 to excavate or locate at least 100 acres of growout ponds to raise razorback suckers and other endangered fish for further stocking in the Green, Colorado, and Gunnison rivers.
- Diversion canal screening: Funding is needed in FY 2001 to construct a screen at the Grand Valley Irrigation Company Diversion Canal to prevent endangered fish from being drawn out of the river and into the canals. (The habitat above the diversion is used by adult endangered fish.) Funding in the amount of $2,110,000 is also needed to construct a screen at the Tusher Wash Diversion Canal to prevent fish from being entrained into irrigation canals and the power plant.

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program Activities

- The Biology Committee is developing a long-term capital facilities plan. The most likely capital expenditures for FY 2001 will be to provide fish passage at Hogback and Cudei diversion dams in New Mexico and planning and designing passage structures at other locations on the San Juan River. Current maintenance of the Hogback Diversion structure requires extensive annual use of heavy equipment in the stream channel to rebuild the structure after spring flood events. Funding will be used for that portion of the construction that benefits the endangered fish. A fortified diversion structure that incorporates a fish passage channel into the design will be constructed. The Cudei diversion is a rock and earthen structure that impedes the ability of fish to move upstream and will be removed and replaced with a siphon that does not block the stream channel.

Endangered Fish
Status and Recovery Highlights

Upper Colorado River and San Juan River Recovery Programs

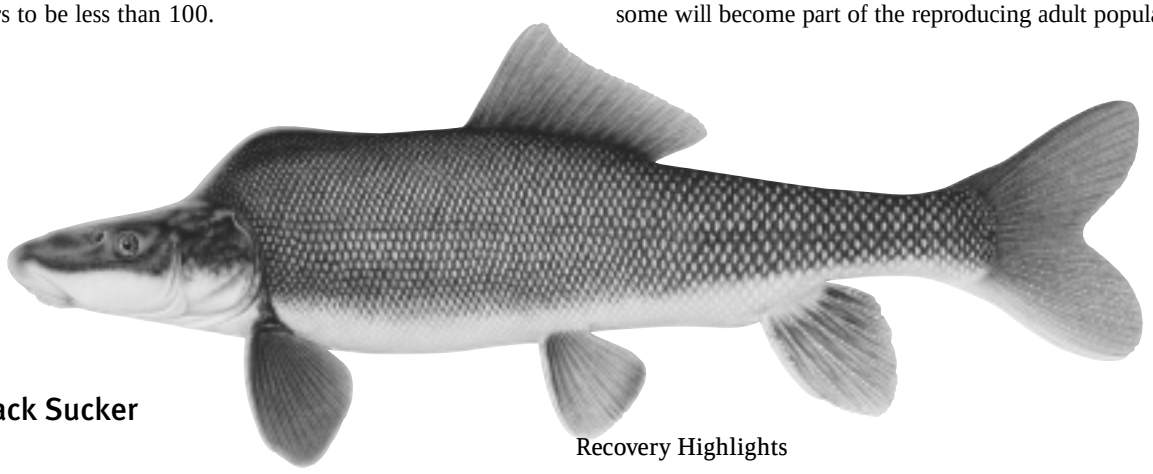
Colorado Pikeminnow

Status

- Since 1991, Colorado pikeminnow captures have doubled in the Colorado River. Currently, the population is estimated at 768 adults. In the Green/Yampa River Basin, captures in the Green River have tripled since the early 1980s, indicating that the population is expanding.
- The State of Colorado downlisted the Colorado pikeminnow from "State-endangered" to "State-threatened" in 1998.
- In the San Juan River, the Colorado pikeminnow population appears to be less than 100.

Recovery Highlights

- Construction of the Redlands Fish Ladder on the Gunnison River opened up 57 miles of historic habitat. The completion of two passageways on the upper Colorado River will yield another 55 miles. Combined, these passageways will triple the available habitat for adult Colorado pikeminnow and razorback suckers in the upper Colorado River.
- Greater numbers of young Colorado pikeminnow survived than expected when stocked into the San Juan River. It appears some will become part of the reproducing adult population.



Razorback Sucker

Status

- The population continues to decline in some areas of the Upper Colorado River Basin. Because of its scarcity, this species has been given highest priority for hatchery raising and stocking.
- The Green River contains fewer than 500 wild razorbacks that biologists believe represent a spawning population.
- No wild razorback suckers have been found recently in the San Juan River.

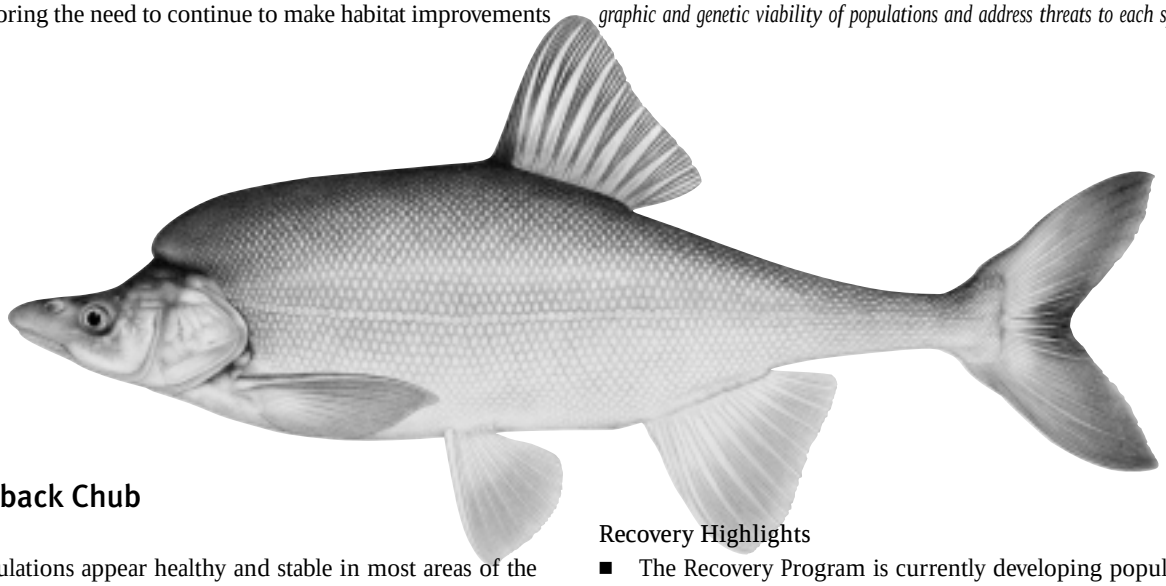
Recovery Highlights

- More than 10,000 razorback suckers have been raised and stocked in the Upper Colorado River Basin to date. Another 10,000 will be stocked in 2000.
- Between 1994 and 1999, 5,103 razorback suckers were stocked in the San Juan River. Young razorback suckers found in the river indicate that formerly stocked razorback suckers are surviving and spawning.

During the past several years, the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program has mounted an extensive effort to establish state-of-the-art hatcheries that raise endangered fish and protect them from extinction. These facilities are enabling the Recovery Program to meet approved stocking plans. In the future, the Recovery Program plans to stock 2,040,000 razorback suckers, 755,800 bonytails, and 21,600 Colorado pikeminnows.

Many hatchery-raised stocked fish will not survive in the wild, underscoring the need to continue to make habitat improvements initiated by the Recovery Program. These include building fish passageways, improving stream flows, and restoring wetland habitat. Biologists believe these habitat improvements are essential to the success of stocking efforts and to recovery of endangered fish in the Colorado and San Juan River Basins.

NOTE: Recovery goals for all four species of endangered fish are being developed with expected completion and approval in 2000. The goals will identify the demographic and genetic viability of populations and address threats to each species.



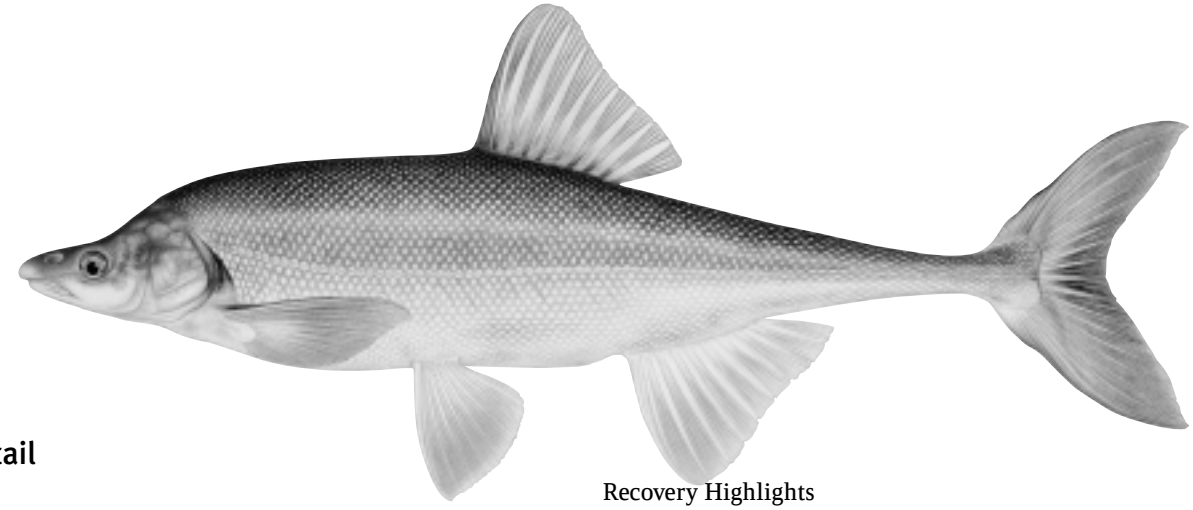
Humpback Chub

Status

- Populations appear healthy and stable in most areas of the Upper Colorado River Basin. The population at Blackrocks and Westwater canyons, near the Colorado-Utah border, is estimated at 3,500.

Recovery Highlights

- The Recovery Program is currently developing population estimates for the entire Upper Colorado River Basin.



Bonytail

Status

- This is the rarest of the four endangered Colorado River fish species. Before stocking began, bonytails had virtually disappeared in the Upper Colorado River Basin.

Recovery Highlights

- More than 20,000 bonytails have been raised and stocked in the Colorado River since 1996. Another 13,000 have been released in the Green River. A total of 64,000 more will be stocked in the Green and Colorado Rivers in 2000. This is the first time bonytails will be stocked in the State of Colorado.

Program Overview

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program is an interagency partnership created to recover the endangered Colorado pikeminnow, razorback sucker, humpback chub, and bonytail while allowing for continued and future water development. The Recovery Program was initiated in 1988 when a cooperative agreement was signed by the Governors of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming; the Secretary of the Interior; and the Administrator of Western Area Power Administration.

Program Partners

- Colorado River Energy Distributors Association
- Colorado Water Congress
- Environmental Defense
- State of Colorado
- State of Utah
- State of Wyoming
- The Nature Conservancy
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Utah Water Users Association
- Western Area Power Administration
- Wyoming Water Association

Program Elements

- Habitat management includes identifying and acquiring instream flows, changing operations of Federal dams, and operating other reservoirs in a coordinated manner to benefit endangered fish.
- Habitat development includes restoring floodplain/wetland habitats and constructing fish passageways around dams and other barriers in the river.
- Native fish propagation and genetic management involves establishing facilities to hold adult broodstock to prevent extinction of these rare fish and maintain their genetic resources; develop growout ponds; conduct research to improve survival of endangered fish raised in captivity and stocked in the wild; and support appropriate stocking and reintroduction efforts.
- Nonnative species and sportfishing entails managing detrimental nonnative fish species in habitat considered "critical" to endangered fish. This also involves educating and distributing information to anglers to reduce accidental capture of endangered fish.
- Research, monitoring and data management provides information about what these fish need to survive, grow, and reproduce in the wild. Efforts include compiling data on the numbers, sizes, and locations of endangered fish; monitoring endangered fish population trends; and making river flow recommendations.

San Juan River Endangered Fish Recovery Implementation Program

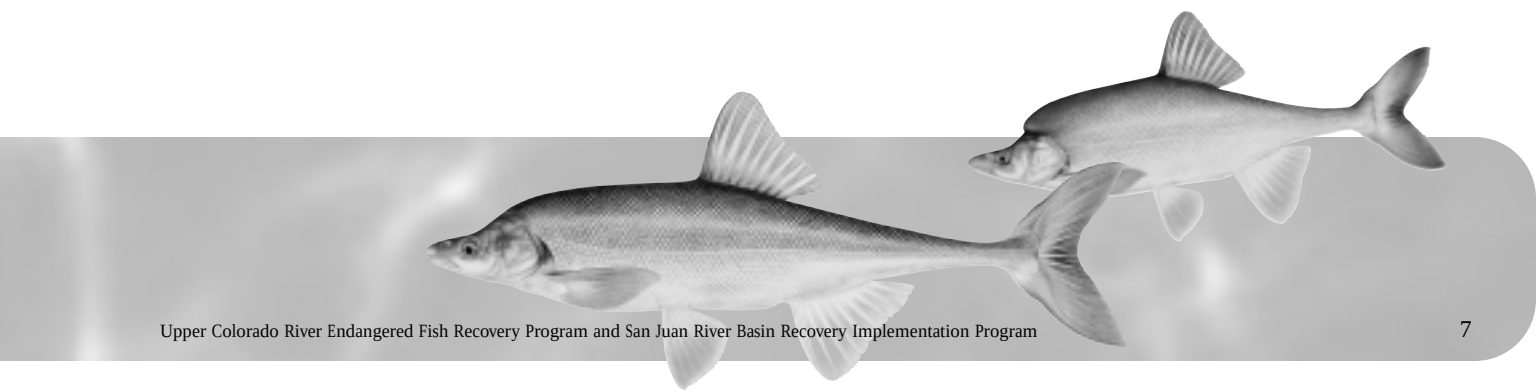
The San Juan River Endangered Fish Recovery Implementation Program was established in 1991 to protect and recover two species of endangered fish in the San Juan River Basin while water development proceeds in compliance with all applicable Federal and State laws, including fulfillment of Federal trust responsibilities to several Indian tribes. It is anticipated that actions taken under this Program to recover the Colorado pikeminnow and razorback sucker will provide benefits to other native fishes in the basin and prevent them from becoming endangered in the future.

Program Partners

- Jicarilla Apache Tribe
- Navajo Nation
- Southern Ute Tribe
- Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
- State of Colorado
- State of New Mexico
- U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Water Development Interests

Program Elements

- Protection of genetic integrity, management and augmentation of populations involves obtaining tissues of populations of endangered fish and comparing them with other basins, evaluating the efficacy of using neutered fish to locate spawning habitats, establishing refugia with stock taken from the wild, and augmenting wild populations of endangered fish species.
- Protection, management, and augmentation of habitat involves identifying important reaches of the San Juan River for different life stages of the endangered fish by mapping current conditions, determining the need for physical modification of habitats, and monitoring flow needs and effects on the habitat.
- Water quality protection and enhancement involves monitoring existing water quality conditions, evaluating historic information, identifying types and sources of contamination, and investigating changes in water chemistry.
- Interactions between native and nonnative fish species involves determining the distribution and abundance of nonnative species, identifying and characterizing habitats used by the nonnative fish, and discontinuing stocking of nonnative species in areas where endangered fish occur.
- Monitoring and data management is needed to evaluate status and trends of endangered fish species as well as other native and nonnative species and to define the overall success of the Recovery Program.



Highlights of
Recovery Program Accomplishments

Habitat Management

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

- Biological synthesis reports were completed. The reports will be used to prepare programmatic biological opinions for Flaming Gorge Dam on the Green River and Aspinall Unit Dam on the Gunnison River.
- Utah's State Engineer enacted a water-rights policy protecting Green River flows from Flaming Gorge Dam downstream to the Duchesne River.
- Since 1998, a cooperative effort of public and private organizations has resulted in management of releases of 30,000 acre-feet of surplus water from Green Mountain Reservoir and coordinated releases from Ruedi and Wolford Mountain Reservoirs. This effort, combined with releases from other reservoirs, meets the Service's flow recommendations for the endangered fishes.
- The final 15-Mile Reach Programmatic Biological Opinion was signed in 1999. The opinion provides Endangered Species Act compliance for 1 million acre-feet per year of existing depletions and 120,000 acre-feet per year of new depletions in the Colorado River above the confluence with the Gunnison River.
- Recovery Program participants coordinated operations of several reservoirs in Colorado during spring 1997–1999 to provide additional flows in the Colorado River of about 2,500 cubic feet per second for one week during spring runoff.
- Colorado State Parks, the Colorado Water Conservation Board, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have developed an agreement to release up to 3,300 acre-feet of water annually from Steamboat Lake.
- Since 1988, the Service has consulted on more than 220 projects in the Upper Basin using the Recovery Program as a reasonable and prudent alternative. The Service simplified the section 7 consultation process by waiving fees for water projects that deplete less than 100 acre-feet of water per year.

COOPERATIVE EFFORTS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS RESULTS IN COORDINATED RELEASES OF WATER FROM RESERVOIRS SUCH AS RUEDI IN WESTERN COLORADO.

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program

- A seven-year research program was completed in 1999.
- Flow recommendations for the San Juan River Program were approved in 1999.
- The Bureau of Reclamation has altered the timing and magnitude of releases from Navajo Dam.
- A long-range action plan will be completed in Fiscal Year 2000.

Habitat Development

THE REDLANDS FISH LADDER HAS ALLOWED 47 COLORADO PIKEMINNOW AND MORE THAN 34,000 OTHER NATIVE FISH SPECIES TO MIGRATE AROUND THE 12-FOOT DAM AND REACH KNOWN SPAWNING HABITAT UPSTREAM IN THE COLORADO RIVER.

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

- A 350-foot-long fish ladder, completed at Redlands Diversion Dam on the Gunnison River in 1996 has allowed passage of 47 endangered Colorado pikeminnow and more than 34,000 other native fish.
- A fish passageway was completed in January 1998 at the Grand Valley Irrigation Company Diversion Dam on the Colorado River.
- Floodplain/wetland habitat has been improved to benefit endangered fish at five Bureau of Land Management sites on the Green River and three sites at the Ouray National Wildlife Refuge near Vernal, Utah, as well as two sites on the Colorado River near Grand Junction.
- The Recovery Program has acquired easements on eight properties along the Green and Colorado rivers for a total of 580 acres of protected habitat.

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program

- Flow regimes to restore native fish habitat have been implemented.

Native Fish Propagation and Stocking

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

The following hatchery facilities have been established in Colorado and Utah:

- Ouray National Fish Hatchery (Utah): This 36-pond facility was established as a refuge for razorback suckers from the Green River basin.
- Wahweap Endangered Fish Facility (Utah): This site currently provides 23 ponds to raise bonytail to prevent extinction in the wild and for stocking into the Green, Colorado, and Gunnison rivers.
- Grand Valley Endangered Fish Facility (Colorado): This consists of 24 Road Hatchery, Horsethief Canyon ponds and additional growout ponds:
  - The 24 Road Hatchery hatches razorback sucker eggs, raises larvae from different parent fish, and maintains genetic diversity similar to that of wild populations.
  - Horsethief Canyon State Wildlife Area uses six ponds to maintain razorback sucker adults for future production.
  - Grand Valley has approximately 25 acres of ponds used to grow fish to larger sizes before stocking into the river.

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program

- Native fish propagation and stocking has focused on stocking razorback suckers in growout ponds and about 4,000 in the San Juan River. Young Colorado pikeminnow are being stocked in the San Juan River.

THE OURAY NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY IS ONE OF FIVE FACILITIES THE RECOVERY PROGRAM ESTABLISHED TO RAISE ENDANGERED FISH. THESE HATCHERIES AND PONDS HAVE RAISED THOUSANDS OF THE TWO RAREST SPECIES—RAZORBACK SUCKERS AND BONYTAILS—FOR STOCKING IN THE WILD.

Research, Monitoring, and Data Management

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

- Federal and State biologists completed a comprehensive report summarizing the first seven years of efforts to track endangered native and nonnative fish populations.
- A population estimate for Colorado pikeminnow on the Colorado River was initiated in 1991–1994. At that time the Colorado pikeminnow population was estimated at around 600 adults. The 1998–1999 estimates were around 768, indicating an increase.
- The Recovery Program is in the process of carrying out population estimates for all four endangered fish species throughout the Upper Basin.

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program

- Research addresses young fish identification, habitat mapping, effects of flow regimes on nonnative fish, evaluation of stocked razorback sucker, and study of contaminants. The young, juvenile, and adult fish communities, and fish health, are being monitored. Monitoring also includes channel morphology and aspects of the river water. A large data management aspect is the GIS-based integrated database.

THROUGH RESEARCH AND MONITORING, BIOLOGISTS HAVE DISCOVERED THAT THE NUMBER OF COLORADO PIKEMINNOW CAPTURES HAVE DOUBLED IN THE COLORADO RIVER SINCE 1991.

Nonnative Species, Sportfishing and Public Information/Involvement

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

- Federal and State wildlife agencies in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming have finalized an agreement in 1996 on stocking of nonnative sport fish called Nonnative Fish Stocking Procedures. In 1998, the Colorado Division of Wildlife incorporated this agreement into its State stocking requirements.
- To date, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Colorado Division of Wildlife, and the Service have removed more than 20,000 nonnative channel catfish, 10,000 nonnative sunfish and bass, and 200,000 nonnative minnows from rivers in the Upper Colorado River Basin.
- A project to remove and relocate nonnative adult northern pike from the Yampa River was initiated in 1999.
- Chemical reclamation of ponds adjacent to the Colorado and Gunnison rivers to reduce sources contributing nonnative fishes to riverine habitats started in 1998 and continued in 1999. To date, 104 ponds have been surveyed, and 19 have been chemically reclaimed. This project continues in 2000.
- A fish barrier net was installed in 1999 in Highline Lake Reservoir near Grand Junction, Colorado, to reduce escapement of nonnative sport fishes from the reservoir and into reaches of critical habitat in the Colorado River.
- Recovery Program participants have coordinated public involvement activities for key Recovery Program actions, including Colorado instream flow acquisition, construction of fish passageways, coordinated reservoir operations, water releases from Ruedi Reservoir, development and implementation of nonnative fish stocking procedures, acquisition and restoration of wetland habitat, Yampa River and Grand Valley water management.
- The Recovery Program produces a wide range of educational materials, including a newsletter, brochure, video, and portable and permanent interpretive exhibits.
- The Recovery Program maintains a Web site at www.r6.fws.gov/coloradoriver

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program

- In the San Juan River system, nonnative fish can be an impediment to the survival of native fish. Some species, such as channel catfish, are being directly controlled while control of other species, such as the red shiner, is being attempted through restoration of the natural flow regime and restoration of river habitat.
- Full participation of the public in the San Juan River Recovery Implementation Program is invited through open public meetings. The San Juan River Program also maintains a Web site at http://southwest.fws.gov/sjrip.

Long-term Funding Legislation

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program and San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program

The success of both Recovery Programs depends on obtaining sufficient funds to implement recovery activities such as those identified in the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Action Plan. The Federal portion of the remaining capital costs for implementing the Upper Colorado River and San Juan River Basin Recovery Programs is estimated at $46 million, plus $17 million from the States and another $17 million from power users. The funding is needed to complete a variety of capital projects, which include building fish ladders, acquiring water, constructing hatchery facilities, and acquiring and restoring floodplain habitats used by endangered fish.

In October 1994, the Recovery Program's Implementation Committee formed an Ad Hoc Committee to develop a long-term funding strategy for the Recovery Program. The San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program also was invited to participate in the discussions because of both Programs' linkage to the Colorado River Storage Project revenues, a funding source for these Programs.

Participants in the discussions have included:

- States of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming;
- Water, power, and environmental groups;
- Several Indian tribes;
- Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Bureau of Reclamation;
- Western Area Power Administration;
- Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Staff from the House Resources Committee and the Utah and Colorado Congressional delegations have been involved in several of the Ad Hoc Committee's meetings.

House Bill 2348 was introduced to Congress in 1999. The bill authorizes the Bureau of Reclamation to provide cost sharing for the Upper Colorado River and San Juan River Basin Endangered Fish Recovery Implementation Programs. The House Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power heard testimony on October 21, 1999. Senate Bill S.2239 was introduced March 9, 2000. The legislation is expected to pass in 2000.

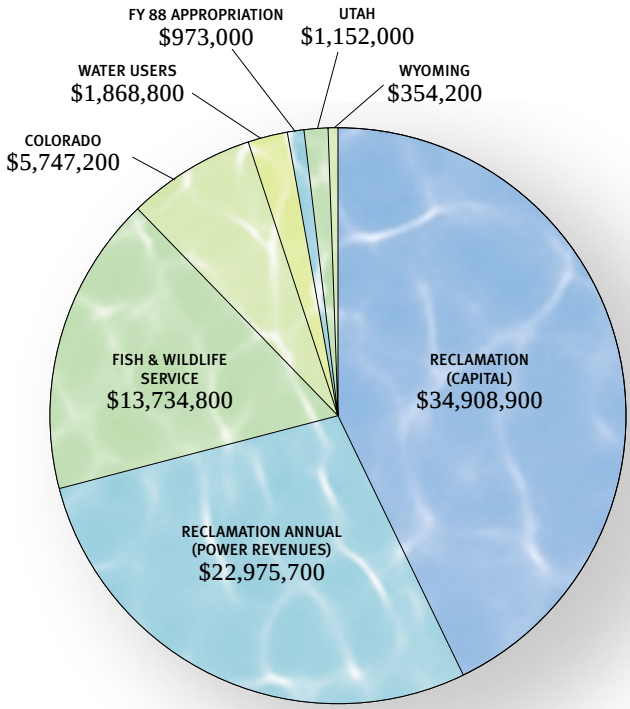
Photo by Richard Judd and courtesy of CREDA

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE PROJECT LEADER FRANK PFEIFER (CENTER) EXPLAINS HOW THE RECOVERY PROGRAM PROVIDES FISH PASSAGE AT THE REDLANDS DIVERSION DAM ON THE GUNNISON RIVER. HIS AUDIENCE IS HOUSE AND SENATE STAFF AND FEDERAL AND STATE REPRESENTATIVES FROM UTAH, COLORADO AND WYOMING WHO PARTICIPATED IN A SPECIAL TOUR HOSTED BY THE COLORADO RIVER ENERGY DISTRIBUTORS ASSOCIATION (CREDA), IN AUGUST 1999.

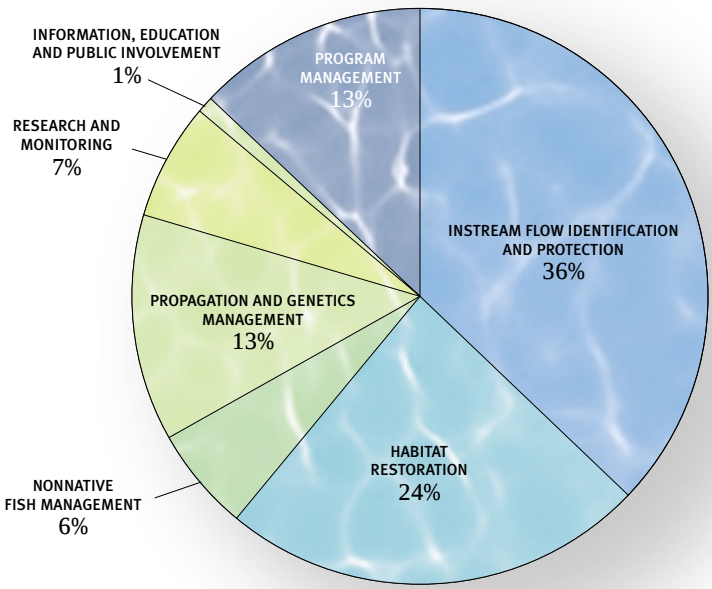
Expenditures

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

Total Expenditures = $81,714,600 (FYs 1989–2000)



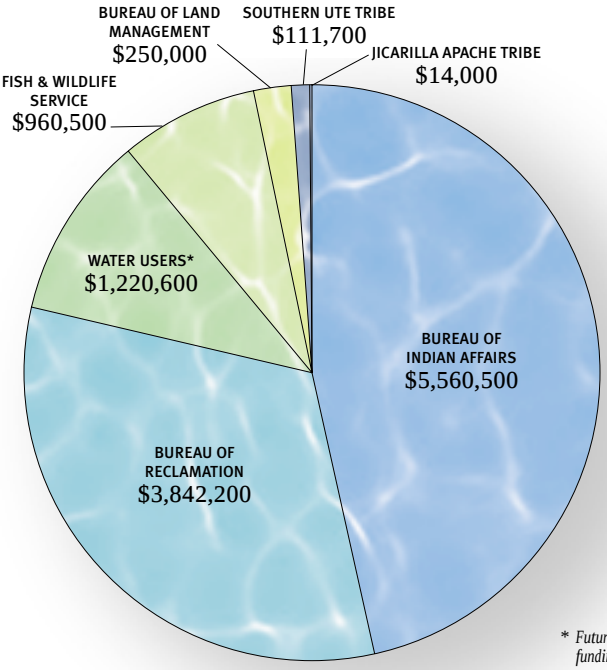
Percentage Expenditures by Category (FY 2000 only)



Expenditures

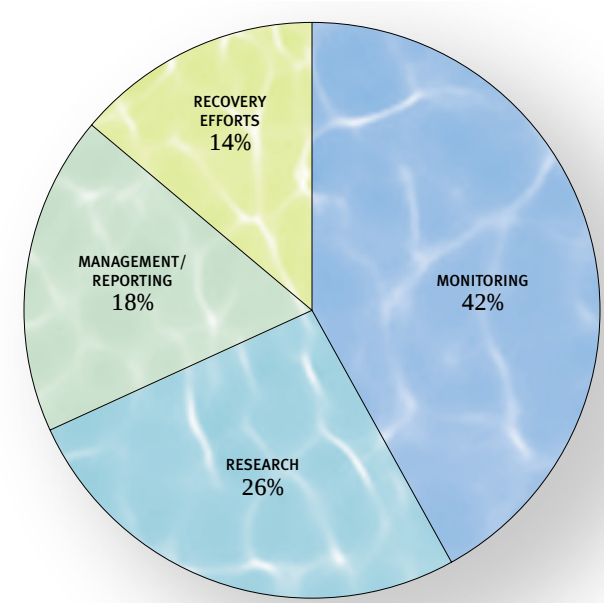
San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program

Total Expenditures = $11,959,500 (FYs 1992–2000)
(Not including in-kind contributions)



* *Future reimbursement of Bureau of Reclamation funding by Animas-La Plata Water Users*

Percentage Expenditures by Category (FY 2000 only)



Water Project Consultations

Under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act

Table 1

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program
Summary of Section 7 Consultations

(1/1998 through 12/31/1999)

State	Number of Consultations	Historic Depletions Acre-feet/yr	New Depletions Acre-feet/yr	Totals Acre-feet/yr	Depletion Fees[4]
Colorado [1]	162	1,005,055.79	142,476.31	1,147,532.10	$ 323,344
Utah	26	421,717.74	59,226.95	480,944.69	360,232
Wyoming	29	3,316.00	13,034.09	16,350.09	150,339
Regional [2,3]	3	0.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	0
Totals	220	1,430,089.53	220,737.35	1,650,826.88	$ 833,915

[1] Includes Colorado River Biological Opinion, 12/20/99, on 1 million AF/yr of historic depletions and 120,000 AF/yr of new depletions. Depletion charges on new depletions will be assessed as individual consultations occur.

[2] Depletion charges waived by USFWS for consultations on depletions of less than 100 AF/yr.

[3] Represent "blanket" consultations for depletions under 100 AF/yr, up to 6,000 AF/yr total. These consultations have covered 355 small projects depleting 5,080 AF/yr as of 12/31/99 (3,798 AF/yr in Colorado, 795 AF/yr in Utah, and 487 AF/yr in Wyoming).

[4] Pre-FY 1990: $10/AF; FY 2000: $14.36/AF.

Table 2

San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program
Summary of Section 7 Consultations

State	Historic Depletions Acre-feet/yr	New Depletions Acre-feet/yr	Totals Acre-feet/yr
New Mexico [1,3]	446,500.00	124,000.00	570,500.00
Colorado [2,3]	146,000.00	57,100.00	203,100.00
Totals	592,500.00	181,100.00	773,600.00

[1] New depletion includes minor depletions (less than 100 AF), estimated at 3,000 AF and blocks 9–11, Navajo Indian Irrigation Project.

[2] New depletion associated with Animas-La Plata Project.

[3] Source: 1996 Animas-La Plata Project Biological Opinion.

Letters of Support

The Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery and San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Programs have a broad range of supporters. Letters signed by Colorado Governor Bill Owens, Utah Governor Michael Leavitt, Wyoming Governor Jim Geringer, and members of Congress are included.

Other letters of support were sent to Congress by:

- Animas-La Plata Water Conservancy District, Durango, Colorado
  Richard K. Griswold, President, Board of Directors
- Board of Water Works of Pueblo, Colorado
  Alan C. Hamel, Executive Director
- Central Utah Water Conservancy District
  Don A. Christiansen, General Manager
- Colorado Department of Natural Resources
  Greg E. Walcher, Executive Director
- Colorado River Water Conservation District, Glenwood Springs, Colorado
  Eric Kuhn, Secretary-Engineer
- Colorado Springs Utilities
  Leah D. Ash, Director, Water Resources Department
- Colorado Water Congress
  Frank E. "Sam" Maynes, Chairman, CWC Federal Affairs Committee
- Denver Board of Water Commissioners
  H.J. Barry, III, Manager
- Wyoming State Engineer
  Gordon W. "Jeff" Fassett
- New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission
  Thomas C. Turney, Secretary
- Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, Loveland, Colorado
  Eric W. Wilkinson, General Manager
- Public Service Company of New Mexico
  Patrick J. Goodman, Vice President, Power Production

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 30, 1999

Congressman Ralph Regula
Chair, Subcommittee on Interior
B308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Regula:

We are writing to request your support and assistance in insuring continued funding for the Recovery Implementation Program for Endangered Fish Species of the Upper Colorado River Basin ("Recovery Program"). This multi-state, multi-agency Recovery Program is being implemented in the Upper Colorado River Basin with the objective of recovering four endangered fish species while water development proceeds in compliance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973. This funding will ensure that federal cost sharing funds are provided to the Recovery Program. We request your support for the following:

That the Subcommittee support the appropriation of $624,000 of resource management funds to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to meet its funding commitment to the Recovery Program. This is the amount requested in the President's FY 2000 budget proposal and is approximately the same amount requested in previous years.

That language be included in the Subcommittee's FY 2000 appropriations legislation to indicate that $200,000 of ESA Section 6 funds should be allocated to the Recovery Program before the FWS formula for allocating funds among its regions is applied. The ESA Section 6 budget for more than 70 listed species in FWS Region 6 is expected to be $429,000 in FY 1999. Dedicating $200,000, almost half of the Region's entire Section 6 budget, to four endangered Colorado River fish will adversely and significantly impact state recovery programs for the other listed species in FWS Region 6. Our requested language will insure continued funding for the Recovery Program, but not at the expense of other high priority recovery efforts in Region 6. In fiscal years 1992, 1993, and 1994, the Subcommittee earmarked $200,000 pursuant to Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act for the Recovery Program.

That the Subcommittee support the continued base funding in fiscal year 2000 of $376,000 for the FWS (Fisheries Activity; Hatchery O&M Subactivity) to operate the endangered fish propagation facilities at the Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah as requested in the President's budget proposal.

To provide for the continued success of this multi-state, multi-agency program, we need the help of the Subcommittee again this year to ensure that FWS is given adequate funds and direction on how to allocate its funds for recovery of the endangered fishes in the Upper Colorado River Basin. We are thankful for your past support and look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

James Hansen
Member of Congress

Scott McInnis
Member of Congress

Barbara Cubin
Member of Congress

Chris Cannon
Member of Congress

Merrill Cook
Member of Congress

Bob Schaffer
Member of Congress

Tom Tancredo
Member of Congress

Mark Udall
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

STATE OF COLORADO

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
136 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792
Phone (303) 866-2471

Bill Owens
Governor

April 6, 1999

The Honorable Wayne Allard
716 Hart
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sen. Allard:

During the 105th Congress you sponsored the Upper Colorado and San Juan River Endangered Fish Recovery Act of 1988. This legislation provides the statutory authorization the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation needs to be able to construct capital projects designed to recover native fish.

Because Colorado has such a huge stake in these programs, and because of Colorado's historic leadership on water issues, it is important that you reintroduce similar legislation, reflecting clarifying amendments supported by states, federal agencies, water users, power customers, and conservation groups.

Many parties had conditioned their support for the legislation you introduced in the 105th Congress upon a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) programmatic review of the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

The USFWS released its review as a preliminary draft Biological Opinion on March 5, 1999. The Biological Opinion indicates that endangered fish will not be jeopardized by water depletions from Rifle to Lake Powell as long as the endangered fish Upper Colorado River Recovery Implementation Plan and Recovery Action Plan (RIPRAP) continues to be implemented.

Nevertheless, and despite initial favorable reviews of Biological Opinion by water users, I am told that Colorado water users had already unconditionally endorsed the reintroduction and swift passage of the revised legislation.

In addition, the San Juan River Endangered Fish Recovery Program cannot be fully implemented unless the legislation I am asking you to sponsor is passed. This is critical because this program is the mechanism that ensures the construction of the Animas-La Plata water project does not violate the Endangered Species Act.

Therefore, you have my strong support for expeditious action in gathering cosponsors, reintroducing the legislation and taking other steps that may be necessary to ensure its swift passage. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help.

Sincerely,

Bill Owens
Governor

STATE OF UTAH

MICHAEL O. LEAVITT
GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
SALT LAKE CITY
84114-0601

OLENE S. WALKER
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

April 14, 1999

The Honorable Ron Packard, Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
2362B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-6020

Dear Chairman Packard:

I request your support for an appropriation in Fiscal Year 2000 of $9,340,000 to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) for a budget item labeled "Upper Colorado Region - Endangered Species Recovery Implementation Program." Of that amount $7,228,000 is designated for expenditure on construction activities associated with the Recovery Implementation Program for Endangered Fish Species in the Upper Colorado River Basin (Recovery Program).

The Recovery Program is a mutually supported program involving the states of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming, environmental organizations, power users, water user and development interests, Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Western Area Power Administration. This Recovery Program, now in its 11th year of operation, has the objective of cooperatively recovering four endangered fish species while water development proceeds in compliance with the federal Endangered Species Act. To continue accomplishing our Program's objective, Utah and the participating states, agencies and organizations need your help to ensure that Reclamation's appropriation includes the requested level of funding for this innovative and successful program.

I would appreciate your assistance in securing the needed Fiscal Year 2000 funding for this important multi-state, multi-agency program. Thank you for your consideration of the program.

Sincerely,

Michael O. Leavitt
Governor

mol/kc/rvk
cc: The Honorable Jim Geringer
The Honorable Bill Owens

STATE OF WYOMING
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

JIM GERINGER
GOVERNOR

STATE CAPITOL
CHEYENNE, WY 82002

April 1, 1999

The Honorable Pete Domenici, Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Energy and Water Development
United States Senate
132 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Domenici:

I urge you to support an appropriation in Fiscal Year 2000 of $9,340,000 to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) for a budget item labeled "Upper Colorado Region - Endangered Species Recovery Implementation Program." Of that amount, $7,228,000 is designated for expenditure on construction activities associated with the Recovery Implementation Program for Endangered Fish Species in the Upper Colorado River Basin (Recovery Program).

The Recovery Program is a mutually supported program involving the states of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming, environmental organizations, power users, water user and development interest, Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Western Area Power Administration. This Recovery Program, now in its eleventh year of operation, has the objective of cooperatively recovering four endangered fish species while water development proceeds in compliance with the federal Endangered Species Act. To continue accomplishing our Program's objective, Wyoming and the participating states, agencies and organizations need your help to ensure that Reclamation's appropriation includes the requested level of funding for this innovative and successful program.

I would appreciate your assistance in securing the needed Fiscal Year 2000 funding for this important multi-state, multi-agency program. Thank you for your past support and for your consideration.

Best regards,

Jim Geringer
Governor

JG:gwf:js

cc: Senator Craig Thomas
Senator Mike Enzi
Governor Mike Leavitt
Governor Bill Owens

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Recovery Program Participants

Washington, D.C. Visit—April 12–18, 2000

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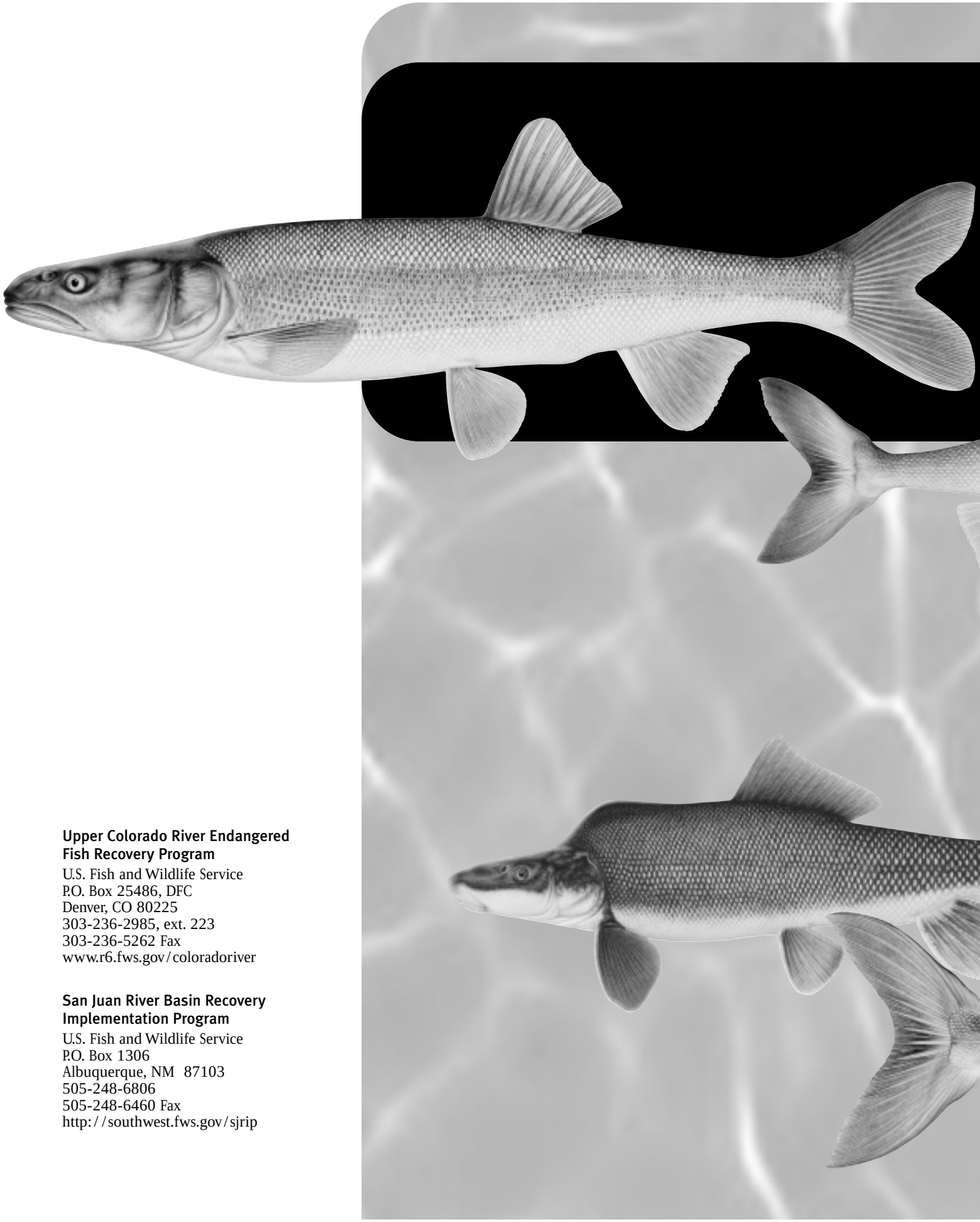

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